

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- [Handwritten mark: A large checkmark with 'OK' written vertically next to it.]*
1. (amended) In an apparatus for a tattoo machine comprising at least one reciprocating needle, a housing surrounding said needle, and a frame, a means of securing said housing to said frame comprising:
 - (a) a nut;
 - (b) a ferrule; and
 - (c) a receiving piece,
 2. (new) The apparatus of Claim 1 wherein said housing is inserted in said receiving piece, said ferrule encircles said tube, abuts said receiving piece, and is adapted to compress, thereby retaining said housing as said nut is tightened onto said receiving piece.
 3. (new) The apparatus of Claim 2 wherein said receiving piece is a removable hollow rod having threads on its external surface adapted to receive threads disposed on the internal surface of said nut.
 4. (new) The apparatus of Claim 2 wherein said receiving piece is a tapped hole in said frame.
 5. (new) The apparatus of Claim 3 wherein said ferrule is a split ring with an external surface which tapers down from a central highpoint to the outer edges of said ferrule.
 6. (new) The apparatus of Claim 5 wherein said ferrule is metal.
 7. (new) The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein said metal is one of brass, aluminum, steel, or iron.

8. (new) The apparatus of Claim 5 wherein said ferrule is compressible thereby reducing the interior diameter of said ferrule.
9. (new) A tube vice frame apparatus in a tattoo machine comprising:
- (a) a hollow threaded cylinder extending from a frame;
 - (b) a split ferrule tapered at both ends removably abutting the interior surface of said cylinder;
 - (c) a tube passing through said cylinder and extending towards the active end of said tattoo machine and disposed about a needle bar adapted to reciprocate within said tube; and
 - (d) a compression nut removably tightened against said ferrule and said cylinder such that said ferrule is compressed thereby retaining said tube in place.
10. (new) The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said cylinder is a hollow rod removable screwed into said frame.
11. (new) The apparatus of Claim 9 wherein said threaded cylinder is integral to said frame.
12. (new) A modular tube vice frame kit for tattoo machines comprising a hollow threaded cylinder, a split ring with beveled ends and a nut adapted to screw onto said cylinder thereby compressing said split ring to grip a tube adapted to house at least one needle.
13. (new) A method of manufacturing a screw tight tube vice frame in a tattoo machine comprising the steps of:
- (a) drilling an internal taper into a hollow rod and cutting threads onto the exterior surface of said rod;

- (b) drilling a first hole into a tattoo machine frame;
- (c) drilling a second hole of a smaller diameter than said first hole through the remaining portion of said frame using the same centerline as said first hole, such that there is a transverse hole in said frame;
- (d) tapping said first hole;
- (e) screwing said rod into said first hole such that said rod protrudes from said frame;
- (f) machining a split ring ferrule with tapered ends of an angle equivalent to said taper of said rod;
- (g) providing a nut adapted to screw onto said rod with said ferrule between said rod and said nut such that said ferrule may be compressed by said nut to retain objects disposed within said ferrule.
14. (new) The method of Claim 13 wherein said frame is cast.
15. (new) The method of Claim 13 wherein said frame is cut using a computer controlled mill.